

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE REPORT ON BIENNIAL HARVEST  
SPECIFICATIONS AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR 2021-2022 GROUND FISH  
FISHERIES

This report presents the results of the National Marine Fisheries Service's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) scoping for the 2021-2022 harvest specifications action and a brief schedule for regulation deeming. NMFS would like to acknowledge and thank the members of the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) for the tremendous amount of work they completed in drafting the analytical documents to support this action.

NMFS conducted NEPA scoping for the Pacific Fishery Management Council's proposed action for the 2021-2022 harvest specifications and management measures and has preliminarily determined that an Environmental Assessment (EA) is the proper level of NEPA analysis as it is unlikely that any of the impacts from the proposed action will be significant. Similar to the approach taken in the past two specifications cycles, NMFS will tier the 2021-2022 biennium NEPA analysis from the analysis completed in the 2015-2016 EIS. For purposes of the 2021-2022 biennium NEPA analysis, NMFS will incorporate analyses from the 2015-16 EIS, the 2017-2018 EA, and the 2019-20 EA for the impacts analysis for groundfish stocks, except where the Council selects management measures that depart from the default harvest control rules.

As in past harvest specification and management measure cycle, NMFS will work closely with Council staff to review regulations before publication in the proposed rule. To allow for this collaboration, we've provided the following as a preliminary regulation deeming schedule:

- ♣ 7/17-NMFS sends Council staff draft regulations for deeming
- ♣ 7/17-7/31-Council staff review of regulations
- ♣ 8/1-Council sends NMFS review comments on regulations
- ♣ 8/1-8/14-NMFS and Council staff work together to finalize draft regulations
- ♣ 8/29- Council sends NMFS final proposed regulations, deeming letter, and transmits FMP Amendment (if needed)
- ♣ September-FMP Notice of Availability and Proposed rule
- ♣ November-Final rule